New methods for tapping mineral resources

63. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state

(a) whether it is a fact that India has 8 per cent of the world's coal, 4 per cent of its iron ore and 7 per cent of its bauxite but so far India has surveyed its resources only by means of geological and seismic analysis and has not undertaken geo-physical and geo-chemical mapping to gauge what lies deep under the ground; and

(b) if so, the steps Government propose to take to reform its outdated mining methods and tap the mineral resources in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES (DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY): (a) As per Indian Bureau of Mines (IBM), the percentage share of India's resources *vis-a-vis* world resources in respect of coal, iron ore and bauxite is about 27%, 7.65% and 10% respectively. Geological Survey of India (GSI), which is the main agency of Government of India for survey and exploration of mineral resources, has employed airborne geophysical survey followed by ground checks of anomalous areas, ground geophysical exploration and sub surface drilling upto shallow level for exploring the mineral resources. GSI has initiated the programmes of National Geophysical Mapping in the Field Season 2002-03 and National Geochemical Mapping in Field Season 2001-02.

(b) GSI has inducted updated techniques for ground geophysical survey, precision analytical instruments and deep capacity drills and is in the process of acquiring heliborne survey system fitted with sensors for improving the quality of exploration and for tapping deep seated mineral resources. Mineral Exploration Corporation Limited (MECL), a public sector undertaking has also inducted remote sensing technique and sub surface grophysical techniques for detailed exploration of mineral resources. Mining does not come under the purview of GSI and MECL. Government of India has opened up the mining sector to private entrepreneurs for attracting modern technology for exploitation of mineral resources.

Illegal mining in Rajasthan

64. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state: